

Schoolmaster Perrin passes on a few tips to his Christ's College pupils.



Schoolmaster Perrin seeks FA Cup glory

THE FA Cup third-round clash between Wycombe Wanderers, those minnows from the Rothmans Isthmian League and mighty Middlesbrough, of the elite First Division, tomorrow (Saturday) has captured the imagination of soccer followers nation-wide. But for the pupils of Christ's College, Finchley, the match has a special significance — Steve Perrin, 22-year-old Wycombe star, is a physical education teacher at the school.

Soccer loyalties at Christ's College are, in the main, sharply divided amongst those struggling North London rivals Arsenal and Spurs. Yet, interest in the

third-round ties, Arsenal v York, and Notts Forest v Spurs, will be merely academic, compared with the fervent enthusiasm for the "David v Goliath" duel at Loukes Park.

It was Perrin's winner in a 2-1 replay victory over Third Division Bournemouth at Dean Court that gave them the chance to attempt the giant-killing act of the third round against "Boro", managed by ex-England star Jackie Charlton.

"I usually get a ribbing from the lads, particularly when we play Hendon. So, you can well imagine that I went through it after that fluke winner against Bournemouth," said grinning Perrin.

"One cheeky youngster asked me if my back still hurt, after reading that the winner went in after hitting me there. But I had to correct him — I was running

across the box when Mick Gorsewill let fly, the ball struck me in the face and flew into the net!"

Scoring vital goals in cup-ties is becoming quite a habit for Perrin. Two in the FA Cup against Newport County helped Wycombe gain a 3-1 win over the Fourth Division club last season, before they went out to Peterborough in the second round. They were among the 32 hit by the former QPR junior, who was with Southall before joining Wycombe, and helped towards the League title triumph by Wanderers.

Does he feel that Wycombe have a hope against the giants of the First Division?

"We should not beat them. But on our sloping pitch, and with the crowd roaring us on, we must have a chance."

In support

Perrin will not be short of support in a crowd of 12,000, a restriction agreed with the police as a safety precaution.

Also playing for Wycombe are former Hendon stars Alan Philips and Gary Hand, who both played in the shock 1-1 draw against First Division Newcastle last season.

His colleague, Martin Priestley, head of physical education at Christ's College, and a large contingent of pupils will be cheering him on. Priestley once played for Wanderers, and his parents live in the town.

"The kids all want tickets," said Perrin. "And I will be happy if they see me score another lucky goal — like the one that beat Bournemouth! After all, they all count!"